



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GLADSTONE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CYBER STALKING

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Gladstone, Mo., man pleaded guilty in federal court today to illegally e-mailing his ex-wife spyware that automatically downloaded to her computer, giving him the ability to monitor her online activities.

Jason Russell, 28, of Gladstone, waived his right to a grand jury and pleaded guilty before U.S. Chief District Judge Dean Whipple this morning to the charge contained in a federal information.

By pleading guilty, **Russell** admitted that he intentionally intercepted and endeavored to intercept electronic communications that were sent through interstate commerce.

Specifically, **Russell** admitted that he purchased a membership with an Internet computer service called Lover-Spy. The service is a form of spyware designed to remotely and surreptitiously monitor and track communications through Internet services, including instant message communications and e-mail. This allowed Russell to read his ex-wife's e-mail and other communications, Graves said.

Russell admitted that he first sent the Lover-Spy software via forged e-mail to his ex-wife disguised as an online greeting card on Sept. 25, 2003. Once the greeting card was opened, Graves said, the Lover-Spy software was automatically downloaded, installed and activated on **Russell's** ex-wife's computer. **Russell** sent the forged greeting from an anonymous e-mail address as though it appeared to originate from a singles service his ex-wife was known to use. The email stated, "You have received a eCard (sic) from an interested member. Click below to review their profile." **Russell's** ex-wife viewed the e-card on several occasions.

On Sept. 26, 2003, **Russell** admitted that he sent a second forged e-mail that read "You never said thank you on my last one and I thought it was kinda cool as a member to send them. I have 3 pics uploaded in my profile after you view the card just click on membership has it's (sic)

benefits.” The second e-mail greeting card also contained a link which downloaded, installed and activated the Lover-Spy application.

Under federal statutes, Graves said, **Russell** may be subject to a maximum sentence of up to five years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Valenti. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow